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## THE FABULOUS STORY OF SPURGEON'S SERMONS

*by Charles H. Spurgeon*

*To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:*

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# METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE

## THE FABULOUS STORY OF SPURGEON'S SERMONS

For over a hundred years, the name of Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) has been a household word among Christians. W. Y. Fullerton, his close friend and one of his many biographers, said:

“To me he is master and friend. I have neither known nor heard of any other, in my time, so many-sided, so commanding, so simple, so humble, so selfless, so entirely Christ’s man. Proudly I stand at the salute!”

B. H. Carroll, founder of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Fort Worth, said “Charles Haddon Spurgeon, by common consent, is acknowledged to be the greatest preacher since apostolic times. I have seen 2,500 of his published sermons. They are as plump as a partridge, and as full of meat as an egg.” By topical arrangement, Carroll said Spurgeon’s sermons would constitute “a complete body of systematic theology.”

Thomas Armitage, who during Spurgeon’s age pastored the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church of New York City and authored the classic work, *A History of the Baptists*, said in 1887 that Spurgeon was “the most remarkable minister of Christ now living.”

William Cathcart, another notable Baptist historian of Spurgeon’s time and the editor of the deservedly famous *Baptist Encyclopedia*, referred to him as “the most widely known preacher of the age.”

Russell Conwell, another of his biographers and author of the immortal “*Acres of Diamonds*,” called Spurgeon “the world’s greatest divine.”

He has been called the “Prince of Preachers,” “Last of the Puritans,” “The Puritan of the Broad Brim,” “The Heir of the Puritans,” and like names. He himself only wanted to be a “John Ploughman,” keeping his hand to the plough and ploughing a straight furrow.

No preacher in the history of Christianity has had his sermons so widely printed, distributed, read, and blessed of God.

“The chief difficulty in appraising the sermons is the number of them,” said Fullerton, who helped in the editing work on the published sermons during the closing years of CHS’s illnesses.

Spurgeon commenced publishing his sermons weekly in 1855 when he was the young pastor of New Park Street Chapel in London. They were published under the title, “The New Park Street Pulpit.” Each year for six years a volume of the sermons was published under this name.

In March of 1861, Spurgeon and the church moved into the tremendous new structure, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, holding more than 5000 people, yet never large enough to accommodate the crowds which flocked to hear the lively sermons delivered at the rate of 140 word per minute, 20 words more than the average rate for public speaking!

Upon entering the Tabernacle, the sermons were published under the title of “The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.” Spurgeon died in 1892, yet his peerless and untiring private secretary, Mr. J. W. Harrald, had stenographically recorded the sermons for many years past, and a sufficient supply was available to continue publishing them for 25 more years, only to be cut short by the first World War early in 1917!

“The New Park Street Pulpit,” the first six volumes, was republished a few years ago by the Banner of Truth Trust of London. Since these volumes have been on the market in recent years, it was considered appropriate that the present republication of Spurgeon’s sermons should commence with the 1861 volume, the first year in which the title “Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit” was used, and the very heart of Spurgeon’s 42-year preaching ministry.

## THE 1861 VOLUME

The 1861 volume is indeed a very significant volume for several reasons:

(1) 1861 marked the transition from the New Park Street Chapel to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and the interesting history of this event is given in this volume.

(2) This volume contains the unusual sermon on the death of the King of England, “*The Royal Death Bed.*”

(3) Another significant section of the 1861 volume is the Bible Conference held at the new Tabernacle on the theme of “Grace.” Mr. Spurgeon moderated this meeting, and also delivered an introductory message. Five guest speakers covered various topics relating to Grace, one of the speakers being James A. Spurgeon, Mr. Spurgeon’s own brother and assistant.

Some of the other suggestive topics in this volume are: Adoption, The First Sermon in the Tabernacle, Full Assurance, The True Apostolical Succession. The First Resurrection, The New Nature, The Infallibility of God’s Purpose, Accidents Not Punishments, Infant Salvation, and others. Two notable “extras” are messages on Christian Baptism by H. Stowell Brown, and “Nonconformity” by J. H. Vincent.

Regarding the sermon, “Accidents, Not Punishments,” Spurgeon said: “*That* discourse is to me the more memorable as I

possess a copy of which Dr. (David) Livingstone had carried with him in his African Journeys, and on the top of which he had written, ‘Very good. — D. L.’ It was found, after his death, in the volume of his Diary from November, 1861, to July, 1863, and was sent to me by his daughter, Mrs. Livingstone-Bruce.” (Autobiography, Vol. 2, pages 214, 215).

## SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON NICOLL (1851-1923)

Nicoll, editor of the Expositor’s Bible, is recognized as an outstanding scholar and theologian. He said: “Spurgeon was, in fact, one of the great doctors of divinity; he had an intuitive knowledge of the ways of God and of the needs of the human heart, and in all his preaching his one object was to commend God to men.” Nicoll said that Spurgeon’s sermons comprised a “Body of Divinity” within themselves.

“The continued life and power of his printed sermons show that his oratory, noble as it was, was not the first thing. Our firm belief is that these sermons will continue to be studied with growing interest and wonder; that they will ultimately be accepted as incomparably the greatest contribution to the literature of experimental Christianity that has been made in this

century, and that their message will go on transforming and quickening lives after all other sermons of the period are forgotten.”

Thus far, Nicoll’s prophetic words have not failed of fulfillment.

## F. B. MEYER (1847.1929)

Meyer was one of the most famous pul-piteers of England and a close friend of D. L. Moody. He said excitedly:

“You may well print the Jubilee number of Scandinavia, and bleak Nova Zembla, they had gone up before him and were waiting and watching for him.

But most rapturous and entrancing vision — see him meet the Master himself! Spurgeon and Christ — the saint and his Saviour, meeting above clouds and sorrow and death.

See the saint casting all his star-crowns and honors at the nail-pierced feet, crying out: “My Lord and my God!” and shouting: “Grace, grace, all grace — a sinner saved by grace.”

Yes, Spurgeon is dead. The tallest and broadest oak in the forest of time is fallen. The sweetest, most silvery and far-reaching voice that published the glad tidings since apostolic times is hushed. The hand whose sickle cut the widest swath in the ripened grain-fields of redemption lies folded and nerveless on a pulseless breast, whose heart when beating time kept with every human joy and woe. In answer to the question: “How do you account for Spurgeon?” the answer is the monosyllable: “God.” Never since Paul died has so much work and so much success been crowded into so small a space of time.

Mr. Spurgeon was pre-eminently a preacher. He preached more sermons, perhaps, than any other man. More people have heard him than have heard any other man. More people have read and do read his sermons than the sermons of any other man. More of them have been translated into foreign tongues than any other sermons. More people have been converted by reading them, in more countries, than by, perhaps, all other published sermons.

Livingstone had one of them in his hat when he died, having carried it through Africa. A widow was found half frozen on an Alpine mountain peak, reading one of them through her tears. A bush-ranger in Australia was converted by reading one, blood-stained, which he had taken from the body of a man he had murdered.

He never found but one place that could hold his congregation — The open fields roofed by the skies.

With whom among men can you compare him? He combined the preaching power of Jonathan Edwards and Whitfield with the organizing power of Wesley, and the energy, fire, and courage of Luther. In many respects he was most like Luther; in many most like Paul.

# B. H. CARROLL'S REMARKS ON

## CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

**FROM AN ADDRESS AT NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE ON THE FIRST SUNDAY  
IN FEBRUARY, 1892**

Last Sunday night at Mentone, France, there died the greatest man of modern times. If every crowned head in Europe had died that night, the event would not be so momentous as the death of this one man. At the depot of death, God's chariot met him as a kingly guest, and a convoy of angels escorted him home. Cherubim hovered over him and Seraphim flamed before him. The bended heavens stooped to meet him.

And who are these, like clouds of doves from the windows of heaven, that fly to greet him? These are his spiritual children, begotten unto God through his ministry, out of every nation and tribe and kindred. From the British Isles, from America, from the Australian bush, from the Islands of the sea, "from Afric's torrid climes," and "Greenland's icy mountains," "from India's coral strand," from the pine-clad mountains

Mr. Spurgeon's sermons in gold! Gold befits gold! I can never tell my indebtedness to them. As I read them week by week in my young manhood, they gave me a grip of the Gospel that I can never lose, and gave an ideal of its presentation in nervous, transparent and forcible language which has coloured my entire ministry. It is marvellous to, notice, also, that the last volume, just published, seems to lack nothing in comparison with those that have gone before. What a blessed ministry this has been to myriads."

Moody himself said, "I have read everything by Spurgeon I can get my hands on," and advised his students to do likewise.

A missionary recently remarked: "Although many selected sermons by Spurgeon have been reprinted in various forms, the amazing thing is that these original, complete volumes, have never been republished." The purpose of the present republication is to contribute to the fulfillment of the prophecy of Nicoll when he said:

“The sermons preached fifty years ago axe a living message today, and one dares to prophesy, will not be out of date when this twentieth century is drawing to its close.”



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